

## Communicating Change

As part of the Public System Reform Act of 2002, the State has completed negotiations and has ratified new Master Agreements (MA) which will replace the one in place in many agencies for over 40 years. On July 1, 2005, these contracts will take effect. Managers on the negotiating teams as well as the governor's team and unions were clear during negotiations that July 1, 2005 is a "new day". Management was clear throughout negotiations about the need to regain many of the management rights negotiated away over the past years.

However, a change of this size does not come without some pain, on all sides. We need to be prepared for these changes. We need to communicate the changes to our managers and employees and ensure everyone makes the needed changes. The Department of Personnel and Labor Relations Office have provided training to your HR staff and materials for them to train your managers. We are also preparing some draft notices that your agency may wish to use, as well as information on some key issues that will come up as we transition from the old to the new.

Here are some of the areas where notice may be necessary:

- Temporary, emergency and rotation appointments change on July 1, 2005, under new MA. Return rights for employees who are permanent in another agency change.
- Probationary and Trial Service period length may change or be extended based on new MA.
- Rights to return for employees who do not successfully complete their Trial Service change.
- Changes in work schedules require different notice periods depending on MA.
- Project employee return rights change.
- Family Medical Leave Act policies come into alignment and may change for some agencies.
- Overtime and Exchange time rules change significantly.
- Some employees' overtime eligibility may change, and for many employees the way overtime is determined may result in less overtime.
- Employees who have been disability-separated have different access back to jobs.
- Employees who have been or will be reduced in force (RIF) have similar placement rights. If they cannot be placed, there have been changes to the length of time on a return register and how agencies consider them. Once returned, the employee will serve a review period.